

Harold A. Sackeim, PhD Columbia University

Dr. Harold A. Sackeim served as Chief of the Department of Biological Psychiatry at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, for 25 years. He is currently Professor of Clinical Psychology in Psychiatry and Radiology, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University and Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Weill Medical College of Cornell University. He is also the founding Editor of the new journal, Brain Stimulation. He received his first B.A. from Columbia College, another B.A. and a M.A. from Magdalen College, Oxford University and his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, where he also completed his clinical training in the Department of Psychiatry.

His research has concentrated on the neurobiology and treatment of mood disorders. He has made numerous contributions to the understanding of pathophysiology of major depression and mania through use of brain imaging techniques and by examining the role of lateralization of brain function in normal emotion, neurological disorders, and psychiatric illness. For the past 27 years, he has led the clinical research on electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) at Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute. This work has identified fundamental factors in this treatment that are responsible for its efficacy and side effects, and has radically altered understanding of both therapeutics and mechanisms of action. This research program has provided compelling evidence regarding the localization of the brain circuits involved in antidepressant effects, and has revamped understanding of the underpinnings of ECT's effects on mood, behavior, and cognition. Dr. Sackeim is widely credited with transforming the use of this treatment worldwide.

Dr. Sackeim has directed programs at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and New York Presbyterian Hospital in the pharmacological treatment of late-life depression, and in the use of Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS), Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) and other forms of focal brain stimulation. Dr. Sackeim is the originator of Magnetic Seizure Therapy (MST), now undergoing clinical trials in the US and Europe, and has recently developed FEAST (Focal Electrically-Administered Seizure Therapy) and FEAT (Focal Electrically-Administered Therapy), new forms of brain stimulation undergoing evaluation as therapeutic modalities in neurological and psychiatric conditions. Dr. Sackeim introduced functional brain imaging to the medical center at Columbia in 1980, and directed a large group using Positron Emission Tomography (PET) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to study pathophysiology and treatment effects in mood disorders, anxiety disorders, Lyme disease, substance abuse, Alzheimer's disease, and normal aging. Other recent work directed by Dr. Sackeim involved preclinical, primate research on the functional significance of structural brain changes induced by different forms of brain stimulation.

Dr. Sackeim is a member of the editorial board of several other journals, chairs the Task Force on ECT for the World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry, and has received many national and international awards for his research contributions. These include three Distinguished Investigator Awards from the National Association for Research in Schizophrenia and Depression, a MERIT Award from the National Institute of Mental Health, the Joel Elkes International Award from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, election as Honorary Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and the Award for Research Excellence from the New York State Office of Mental Hygiene, Edward Smith Lectureship, National Institute of Psychobiology, Israel, the lifetime achievement award from the EEG and CNS Society, and the NARSAD Maddox Falcone Prize, for lifetime achievement in research on affective disorders. He is past President of the Society of Biological Psychiatry and the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. He has authored more than 350 publications.